

Turning Backward.

Written for The Star by Rev. Dr. Teunis S. Hamlin, pastor of the Church of the Covenant, Presbyterian.

Matt. xviii. 3. "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Do you and I need salvation? That we need reformation at many points we will readily grant. We have habits that our consciences disapprove; we have that we are quick to acknowledge should be corrected. We often take ourselves sharply to task for these habits, and solemnly resolve to correct them. They concern our conduct, speech, thought, feeling. Our manners are cold, severe, unlovely. Our words are caustic, sarcastic, bitter. Our judgments are censorious. Our emotions are unkind. Our attitude toward sacred things is trivial. Our demeanor in sacred places and at solemn moments is irreverent. In all these matters we need reformation.

And we are crude, immature. We need education, culture, training. We make too many mistakes. Our characters have too many sharp corners. We too often mean less or more than we say. Not infrequently we are insincere; or, not intending to be so, we make the impression of being so.



Rev. Dr. Teunis S. Hamlin.

But all this, and much more like it, we call immaturity. We do not defend it as a permanent condition, but we excuse it as a necessary stage of development. And we expect to outgrow it. We believe it to be only the sourness of green fruit; the chill of an autumn morning before the sun is well toward the zenith. "Give us time," we say, "and we will ripen into geniality and sweetness."

But meanwhile what is our condition? Are we in a state that may be fairly described by the word "lost," or is this only rhetoric for "ignorant," "crude," "untrained"? Let us take Jesus' word in the matter. He says repeatedly that he came to "seek and to save the lost." But again this may be rhetoric. He does not leave us in doubt, however, for he fully illustrates his meaning. Look at His threefold parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son. Neither of these was "lost" in the sense of "destroyed," "out of existence," and so irretrievable. But, on the other hand, neither was self-recoverable. The sheep had wandered so far that it never could have found its way back. The coin had been lost and reached the purse, or the necklace, whence it had fallen away. The son could not have reinstated himself in the home place that he had forfeited. The shepherd, the owner, the father, were indispensable to recovery. Had not the shepherd gone after the sheep it would have died of starvation or thirst or have been devoured by wild beasts. Had not the woman searched for the coin it would have lain useless and undiscovered among the dust, rubbish and refuse that are always accumulating and hiding things of value. Had not the father opened his home to the son, that son would have lived and died an outcast. And each of these conditions is one of "loss" in the full and true sense of that word, stopping only short of the extreme meaning of non-existence.

But our text makes the matter, if possible, even clearer. "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." The spirit of that kingdom, therefore, is the spirit of early childhood; "little children." Or, to keep to our former phraseology, whoever lacks that spirit is "lost," whoever has it is "saved."

Now Jesus, speaking to adult men and women, of various ages and conditions, tells them comprehensively that they have all lost this spirit of early childhood, and can recover it only by turning back and retracing their steps. Not, of course, in the sense in which we often idly wish ourselves young again. Jesus never tickled human fancy with idle wishes. But in the sense of deliberately abjuring and abandoning, not the maturity of adult years, but the bad accretions that they have brought. And here we are in a region of clear consciousness. We know that in spirit, temper, disposition, we have drifted a very long way from early childhood. Sometimes we are disposed to extenuate, or even to justify, this on the ground that it is only the inevitable result of the increasing knowledge of life and of the world. "Such knowledge," we say, "necessarily makes us at first cautious and then suspicious. We find ourselves overreached and outwitted. We have to struggle for our position and our possessions, and then have to struggle still harder to keep them. Amid selfish and scheming men and women, how can we help plotting and crowding on our own account? Were we to be as simple-minded at fifty as we were at five we could not so much as earn a livelihood or retain a home."

True enough. The little child is not fitted for these things. But to excuse thus the wrong spirit of adult years, which Jesus contrasts with the right spirit of childhood, is to confound a virtuous prudence with vicious envy, jealousy, pride, strife, deceit, treachery. But, leaving all else aside for the moment, how conscious we are of having grown hard! How readily we put the worst construction on others' conduct, when the best, or at least a better, is easily possible! How dry and cold have our sensibilities become! How we repress our sympathy, compassion; the generous estimate and cheerful hope that once were so spontaneous! How little we trust! How unwillingly we take correction! How self-confident and self-centered we have become! All this, I repeat, is matter of conscious experience. No doubt in the hurry and stress of life we are largely oblivious of it; but in a quiet hour of meditation like this, it emerges, and comes home to us. And when we are in contact with little children, how deeply we feel the vast interval between their spirit and our own! We are often advised to seek the society of children; to surround ourselves with them as far as possible, that we may keep young. Even physically and intellectually this is good advice. There is a blessed contagion in their fresh vitality. But spiritually it is not simply good advice; according to Jesus it is an imperative necessity. For it means the difference between being "lost" and "saved."

For, certainly, whoever has drifted away from the temper of early childhood is like the sheep that has wandered far from the fold; like the coin that is hidden amid rubbish; like the son that has deserted and forfeited his home. If these were "lost," he is "lost." If these could be "saved" only by turning and coming back, so can he be "saved" only by retracing the path along which he has passed from the spirit of his childhood.

Beloved, are you far from childhood's spirit today? Does it startle and shame you to reflect how far? Then let Jesus tell you, with his kind frankness, that you are "lost." I beg you, do not resent that word, strong and awful as it is. For it is literally true. And the moment you accept its truth, salvation is at hand; for you will want a Savior; you will turn to Jesus; He will lead you back over the long path of wandering; will bring you once more to the gentle and loyal spirit of early childhood; will keep you safely and sweetly there through time and immortality.

Between individuals or clans at war with one another. They secure justice for war with one another. They are misused or defrauded. Rulers sometimes seek their counsel. They seek and in many cases a large number, in some conditions. They bring to the sick and dying consolation.

Only the other day there was held in the city of Nashville, Tenn., a gathering of young men and women who expected to ally themselves with this undertaking in order to offer to the valuable reinforcement of the most thrilling foot ball game seemed right glad over the prospect of leaving their native land and faring forth to scenes which they had never known. The fact that a number who have preceded them suffered painful and cruel deaths does not deter these new recruits from making the venture. There was hardly one of the 700 American and Canadian higher institutions represented at Nashville which does not intend to have at least one representative, and in many cases a large number, in Africa, China, India or Japan in the course of the next ten years. There was a great concert of action among the colleges. The most thrilling foot ball game could not produce such universal and abiding enthusiasm.

What is the name which men give to this far-reaching enterprise? Some people call it "foreign missions." It might be called with equal fitness, "The betterment of the world." For it has already embraced the condition of mankind in countless cities, towns and villages. It has carried light into dark places, introduced order, decency, cleanliness, sobriety, purity, brotherly love into communities where once lust, greed, tyranny and cruelty held sway. You may see flaws in certain missionaries, but you must admit, if you are candid, that the movement itself is one of the greatest and grandest of this great and grand century.

THE PARSON.

Lord Elgin, the colonial secretary, announced in the house of lords at London Friday that the government had received explanatory telegrams from Natal and that it had been decided to leave the colonial government freedom of action in regard to the executions of the rebellious natives.

There are national brotherhoods in Canada, England, Scotland, the West Indies, New Zealand and Japan, and chapters not organized as national organizations in Ireland, Australia and China. There are all branches of the Anglican communion about seventeen hundred chapters, with a total membership of about eight thousand men and boys.

The national officers of the organization in the United States are: Robert H. Gardner of Maine, president; Judge G. Harvey

Davis of Philadelphia, first vice president; Edmund Billings of Boston, second vice president; Hubert Carleton, general secretary and editor of St. Andrew's Cross; Francis M. Adams, corresponding secretary; Edgar W. Houghton, Jr., secretary; C. C. Payson, treasurer, and Arthur R. P. Hayes, assistant secretary. The organization also maintains four traveling secretaries, one of whom is a colored clergyman of Washington, Rev. F. A. L. Bennett of Calvary Chapel, who is devoting his spare time to the development of the organization in the colored parishes and chapels.

Mr. Houghton, the founder of the organization, who served as its president until 1890, is a prominent business man of Chicago, a member of the banking house of Peabody, Houghton & Co., and actively connected with many of the business organizations of the diocese of Chicago. Mr. Gardner was elected to the office of president at the convention held in Philadelphia in 1904. He is a resident of Gardner, Me., but maintains a law office in Boston, where he has a large practice, and is very prominently connected with many of the business organizations of the diocese of Maine and Massachusetts.

Of the conventions of the organization the oldest held in the United States was at Chicago, the birthplace of the brotherhood, has been freely spoken of as having come nearest to the ideal of a gathering of this character. The Chicago committee accepted an invitation from the University of Chicago and held this convention in its buildings, quartering the delegates in the dormitories, the meals being served in the university mess halls.

The twenty-first annual convention of the organization is to be held at Memphis, Tenn., October 18 to 21 next. This will be the first brotherhood convention held in the south, and it is expected that as the organization is practically in its infancy throughout the south this year's gathering will do much toward building up the brotherhood in that part of the country.

In 1907 Washington is to entertain an international convention of the brotherhood. President Gardner visited this city the early part of last month in the interest of next year's gathering, and while here interviewed President Roosevelt, who agreed, it is stated, to deliver an address during the sessions of the convention.

The three hundred anniversary of the founding of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States is to be celebrated by a year's gathering, and while here interviewed President Roosevelt, who agreed, it is stated, to deliver an address during the sessions of the convention.

The Lenten services this year are very well attended, the center aisles of the church being reserved especially for men and women, and include two or three hymns, the whole service consuming only about twenty-five minutes. They begin promptly at 12 o'clock and close at 12:25 sharp. For this season addresses have been delivered by Bishop Satterlee of Washington, Rev. W. C. Richardson of Philadelphia, Rev. C. M. Roberts of Philadelphia, Right Rev. John M. Brown, D. D., Bishop of Arkansas; Rev. Randolph McKim, D. D.; Rev. Henry Thomas, Rev. G. Calvert Carter, Rev. C. S. Abbott, Jr., Rev. William M. Perry, D. D., and Rev. W. J. Cox, all of Washington.

Next week will close these services for the season. The addresses will be delivered by the Right Rev. S. S. Johnston, D. D., Bishop of Western Texas, and at the last service, Friday, Rev. J. A. Aspinwall, chaplain of the brotherhood.

The junior organization in this diocese is gaining strength each year. Fifteen parishes have now active junior chapters with a total membership of about 150 boys. The junior assembly meets each month, and the organization is conducted along the same lines as the senior organization.

The diocese of Washington junior assembly has as its officers: J. Lewis Gibbs of St. Paul's, vice president; James P. Berkley of St. Paul's, corresponding secretary; Ozie R. Singleton of St. Michael and All Angels, recording secretary; John K. Holmes of St. John's, treasurer, and Rev. Edward S. Dunlap of St. John's, chaplain.

The present officers of the assembly are:

William B. Dent of St. Paul's, president; Hamilton S. Neale of St. Michael and All Angels, vice president; Bert T. Amos of Trinity, corresponding secretary and treasurer; John Lane Johns of Christ Church, recording secretary, and Rev. J. A. Aspinwall, chaplain.

In addition to the officers the executive committee consists of Gen. Cecil Clay of St. Andrew's, H. S. Childs of St. John's, Georgetown, W. B. Everett, Jr., of St. Agnes', J. B. Ireland of Epiphany Chapel, Dr. Gabriel F. Johnson of St. Thomas, Dr. M. E. Miller of Epiphany, E. H. Oxley of Ascension, W. Arthur Sturm of Christ Church, southeast, Dr. F. J. Woodman of St. Mark's, and Charles T. Warner of Christ Church, Rockville.

Several of the brotherhood have been organized in almost all the city parishes and in the dioceses of Washington, Maryland and Eastern. A convention of this organization is held each spring. This annual tri-diocesan convention is to be held in the city of Baltimore, Saturday and Sunday, May 19-20 next. This organization, like the national council and representatives assembly, is governed by representatives from each of the three dioceses. The officers and members of the executive committee are: Bert T. Amos of Washington, president; Arthur E. Houghton of Baltimore, vice president; Charles H. Frederick of Baltimore, secretary; Robert S. Hart, Jr., of Baltimore, recording secretary; C. M. Roberts of Philadelphia, Right Rev. D. Smart of Baltimore, Mark I. Smith of land, Cecil Clay, H. S. Childs, John Lane Johns and J. K. Holmes of Washington, Charles T. Warner of Rockville, W. H. Gibson of Centerville, and B. E. Layton of Eastern.

Under the auspices of the Washington Assembly services are held the second and fourth Sunday evening of each month in the Soldiers, Sailors and Marines' Club, 319 C street northwest; the third Sunday of every other month in the barracks at Fort Myer, every Sunday during the summer months in the Union Chapel at Columbia Beach, Va., and during each Lenten season daily noon services are conducted at the Church of the Epiphany.

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Christ Child Society.

Work of this Organization in Behalf of Italian Immigrants of This City—English Taught and Religious Se vices Held.

One of the most active of the local agencies for the alleviation of human sufferings is the Christ Child Society, which for the past fifteen years is credited with performing a great work. It aims to extend a helping hand to all mankind in need, and through its five branches in scattered portions of the city maintains an organization of which its members and the citizens at large may, it is claimed, be justly proud.

Its most recent expansion has resulted in the establishment of an Italian mission house, located at 230 21st street northwest, where through the ministrations of a number of Roman Catholic clergy and zealous laymen and laywomen members of the local Italian churches are afforded religious instruction, and at the same time are given the English language. The mission is a two-story building, and is stated periods and given both English and religious instruction. Entertainment is also provided. Thus by easy stages the members of the Christ Child Society hope to inculcate in their emigrant charges both religious and civic virtues. Already the work is stated to have proved a gratifying success, so much so that the society expects about to be tried in New York city and Baltimore, where the Christ Child Society is also represented.

When the settlement work among the Italians was proposed by members of local Roman Catholic churches Mrs. G. H. Heaton, vice president of the society, assumed direct charge. As the larger part of the Italian population in this city at present is located in the vicinity of the Holy Trinity Church, it was thought best to locate the mission about an equal distance from each of the Italian centers. The mission house, which is a two-story building, is located on a quiet street, and is well adapted for the necessities. But no matter how large the growth the managers have so far been able to make all who have visited the mission welcome.

A regular program of work is followed each week. Monday and Tuesday evenings there are classes for men, at which there is an attendance of about forty persons at present, when the emigrants are instructed in the intricacies of the English tongue. The teachers at these sessions are all volunteers, and among them are Rev. J. J. Cooper, assistant pastor of St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church, who studied for the priesthood in Rome and is now a member of the Italian community; Dr. Valentine, Mr. and Mrs. Cosentino, Mrs. Chavante, Mrs. H. S. Childs of St. John's, Georgetown, W. B. Everett, Jr., of St. Agnes', J. B. Ireland of Epiphany Chapel, Dr. Gabriel F. Johnson of St. Thomas, Dr. M. E. Miller of Epiphany, E. H. Oxley of Ascension, W. Arthur Sturm of Christ Church, southeast, Dr. F. J. Woodman of St. Mark's, and Charles T. Warner of Christ Church, Rockville.

Wednesday afternoon is devoted to the children who attend the mission. Lessons are given for aid and give a graphic account of the suffering which has come directly under their eyes.

Three districts in northern Japan, Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima, comprising in all a population of 2,221,837 inhabitants, have been made desolate by the most cruel famine experienced in the last sixty years, writes Father Marnas.

The calamity is such, especially in Miyagi, that a local paper goes so far as to say that the sentence of death has been passed on the people of the district, words strictly true if the writer had said "one-third of the population." In fact, out of a population of 900,000, at least 280,000 are reduced to the last straits, and have no means of subsistence if help does not soon reach them.

"The official returns will give some idea of the present misery to which hundreds of thousands are exposed—a condition which, unless relieved, must continue through the spring and summer, until the new harvest."

"The district of Miyagi is by far the most severely afflicted. The usual rice harvest here yields about 12,000,000 yens (a yen is about 50 cents). This year it yielded only about 12 percent of this return. This means a loss of more than 10,000,000 yens, and is indeed the sentence of death hanging over the heads of a quarter of a million people."

The writer describes similar conditions in Iwate and Fukushima, giving statistics, and adds:

"Already in these districts thousands are obliged to subsist on roots, shrubs, ferns and bark to prolong, for at least a time, their lives."

"According to the most conservative estimate, 80,000 persons are absolutely at the end of their resources. Under these conditions, how can I picture to you the state of the poor women and children? Who live in the midst of this misery, which is growing worse daily, can find no words to express our feelings."

"Many will recall the famine in the district of Aomori three years ago, and the generous aid which was speedily sent from Yokohama, Tokio and Shanghai. That calamity was due to the loss of half the country's harvest; the misfortune which has befallen these districts is at least four times greater, and to complete the misery it comes just at the end of a war which has cost unheard-of sacrifices."

"The people of Japan will certainly appreciate the co-operation of all who will help to maintain their admirable courage in the face of these awful trials."

Bishop Berioz of Hakodate adds to this letter:

"The foreigners at Hakodate, without distinction of creed, have formed a committee to secure help. I have learned with much satisfaction that my vicar general, Father Jacquet, has been placed at the head of this committee, and certainly they could not have made a better choice. The devotion of this good priest, his self-denial, his learning, have won for him the respect of all classes, Christians and non-Christians alike."

Rev. Joseph Freri is at the head of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in this country, located at 127 Lexington

avenue, New York, and contributions for the Japanese famine sufferers are being sent to him.

Vagrants.

From the New York Evening Post.

A recent British blue book on vagrancy practically condemns the workhouse system because it fails to distinguish between professional tramps and unwilling vagrants. The method of giving food and lodging for manual work, or none at all, is defective, and it dismisses the criminal wanderer without punishment, and the pauper vagrant without relief. The report also emphasizes the futility of mere imprisonment either as a deterrent to vagrancy or as a punishment for refusing to do prison labor. It is the judgment of the commission that "forced labor" has ceased to exist, except in name. It is further pointed out that the present habit of estimating the tramp population by night lodgings furnished is wholly worthless. In a manner a single active man or woman beating a way through the island may appear as a couple of hundred wards of the state. The remedies suggested are the exclusion of the tramp from the several localities to the counties, the removal of the records of vagrants who have undergone sentence and to identify such on the road; the revival of actual "hard labor" in "colonies" to which chronic vagrants may be condemned for not less than six months or more than three years. The remedy need not necessarily be a punitive one, for Switzerland actually manages to squeeze a small profit out of the compulsory labor of her "vagrants men."

In America the problem is complicated by the presence of varying state jurisdictions, and by the absence of a centralized police; but here also the establishment of an organized work punishment for incorrigible tramps would presumably be better than mere exclusion from the community. It might exceptionally result in an actual work cure for the individual vagrant.

John Hay as a Letter Writer.

From the Century Magazine.

There have been few better letter writers than John Hay. He wrote more nearly as he talked than any man I have ever known, and, as he could not talk in a dull or uninteresting way, so he could not write a dull letter. Some day, when time shall have made it no indiscreet to publish a compilation of his letters, they should be given to the world. They will prove to be not only an intellectual delight, but an inestimable contribution to the history of the time in which he lived and in which he bore an honorable and useful part. It would be quite out of the question to publish them now, for they relate intimately to men now living and to public affairs that are still in the making. The world is full of brilliant letter writers, he did not write with the obvious expectation that his letters would be published, and in which he bore an honorable and useful part. 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